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McMahon is choice for Inman's job

Washington (AP) — The White House yesterday confirmed that President Reagan will nominate John N. McMahon, a CIA veteran who helped run the U-2 spy plane program and later managed the agency's spy network, to succeed Adm. Bobby R. Inman as deputy CIA director.

Larry M. Speakes, deputy White House press secretary, said Mr. Reagan considers Mr. McMahon, who now holds the Central Intelligence Agency's No. 3 post of executive director, "to be a solid professional, a career public servant" who is "respected throughout the intelligence community."

Members of the Senate Intelligence Committee, which will hold confirmation hearings on Mr. McMahon, had modest praise for him, but both Democrats and Republicans said he did not have the stature and clout of Admiral Inman, who was very popular with the committee.

"We'll have to work harder on oversight and ask tougher questions, because McMahon is not Inman, and there are still problems about trusting the administration in this area," said Senator David F. Durenberger, a Republican member of the committee from Minnesota.

Admiral Inman, 51, announced Wednesday that he was leaving a 30-year career in the military and intelligence to enter private business. Intelligence sources were quoted Sunday by *The New York Times* as saying President Reagan would nominate Mr. McMahon as Admiral Inman's successor.

Mr. McMahon, 52, has served in virtually every phase of CIA operations since graduating from Holy Cross in 1951 and joining the agency later that year. His first seven years were spent overseas.

In 1959, Mr. McMahon was assigned to work on the U-2 program. He later held top posts in electronic intelligence, technical services, administration and on the staff that coordinates all U.S. intelligence agencies.

In January, 1978, Mr. McMahon became deputy director for operations in charge of the CIA's clandestine spy network. After more than three years in that job, he was named deputy director for national foreign assessments, which produces the intelligence estimates that the CIA circulates through the U.S. government.

He was promoted to the No. 3 post last January.

Representative Edward P. Boland (D, Mass.), chairman of the House Intelligence Committee, praised Mr. McMahon and said "he has won the full confidence of the committee."

"He is clearly an able professional — one of the most knowledgeable senior intelligence officers the president could have chosen. He has had managerial experience in every important CIA and intelligence community area — operations, analysis, technology and policy. He is a welcome choice," Mr. Boland said.

A spokesman for the Senate Intelligence Committee said no hearing date was set.

A spokesman for committee chairman Barry M. Goldwater (R, Ariz.) said the senator would have no comment on Mr. McMahon's nomination at this time.

But three sources close to the committee said that Mr. Goldwater would have preferred a military officer who might have had more independence from William J. Casey, CIA director, and more stature with other intelligence agencies.

These sources said Mr. Goldwater felt that such a military officer might be more willing to disagree with Mr. Casey or to alert the committee to any troublesome activities that might arise.

A spokesman for Senator Richard G. Lugar (R, Ind.), who last week called Admiral Inman's resignation a traumatic occasion, said Mr. Lugar was very pleased with the nomination, "based on the limited experience the committee has had with McMahon."



JOHN N. MCMAHON

AP